WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of lithographic printing comprising the steps of:

(i) unwinding a web of a flexible lithographic base from a supply spool, the lithographic base having a hydrophilic surface;

(ii) wrapping the lithographic base around a cylinder of a printing press;

(iii) applying on the lithographic base an image-recording layer which is removable in a single-fluid ink or can be rendered removable in a single-fluid ink by exposure to heat or light;

(iv) image-wise exposing the image-recording layer to heat or light;

(v) processing the image-recording layer by supplying single-fluid ink, thereby obtaining a printing master;

(vi) printing by supplying single-fluid ink to the printing master which is mounted on a plate cylinder of the printing press; and

(vii) removing the printing master from the plate cylinder.

2. The method according to claim 1 wherein the image-recording layer is a non-ablative image-recording layer which is removable with the single-fluid ink before exposure to heat or light and is rendered less removable by exposure to heat or light.

3. The method according to claim 2 wherein the image-recording layer comprises hydrophobic thermoplastic polymer particles.

4. The method according to claim 3 wherein the image-recording layer further comprises a hydrophilic binder.

5. The method according to claim 2 wherein the image-recording layer comprises an aryldiazosulfonate polymer.

6. The method according to claim 1 wherein the supply spool is located within the plate cylinder.

7. The method according to claim 1 wherein step (vii) is carried out by winding the printing master on an uptake spool which is located within the plate cylinder.

8. The method according to claim 1 wherein the flexible lithographic base comprises a plastic support, a thin aluminum support or a laminate of plastic and thin aluminum.

9. The method according to claim 1 wherein the single-fluid ink is an emulsion comprising:

(i) a continuous phase comprising an acid-functional vinyl resin; and

(ii) a discontinuous phase comprising a liquid polyol.

10 The method according to claim 9 wherein the vinyl resin is a branched acid-functional vinyl resin having a number average molecular weight of between about 1000 and about 15000 and a weight average molecular weight of at least about 100000.